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Section I: Request

The Department of Geology within the College of Science at Utah State University is requesting to restructure the antiquated wording of the specializations within the existing plan-A Geology MS degree, and also to add those same updated specializations to the existing Geology PhD, which currently has none. The only activities impacted include rewording of catalog descriptions. These specializations simply describe the research training of geology graduate students, and thus no changes are needed in instruction or administrative activities.

Specializations requested, for Geology MS and Geology PhD degrees:

NEW:

Geomorphology and Earth Surface Processes*
Geophysics
Hydrogeology
Petrology and Geochemistry
Sedimentology and Paleoecology
Structure and Tectonics

OLD (MS only):

Surficial Geology
(none)
Hydrogeology
Igneous Petrology, Geochemistry
Sedimentary Petrology, Paleoecology
Structural Geology

*interdisciplinary specialization, shared with USU Dept. of Watershed Sciences

Section II: Need

There are two primary reasons this restructuring/modified wording is needed. First, the active and growing geology PhD program currently has no specializations within it. Having specializations to the degree to help express student training and expertise is an important benefit for graduates as they compete in the job market. Secondly, the long-existing 7 specializations in the Geology MS degree employ antiquated terms and can be streamlined to 6 more effective titles. Importantly, the old specializations no longer reflect the composition of the geology faculty nor the modern research they undertake with graduate students. Lastly, the Geomorphology and Earth Surface Processes specialization is being coordinated as an interdisciplinary specialization with USU's Department of Watershed Sciences.

Section III: Institutional Impact

The requested wording modification will have no affect on recruitment, enrollments, instruction, or administration of affiliated departments at USU. This is a simple request to update wording and broaden existing specializations to cover existing degree programs with the Department of Geology. No changes are needed in personnel or facilities.

Section IV: Finances

No additional costs or savings will be associated with this modification.